

MEDIA RELEASE



MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Hon Julie Bishop MP

17 November 2017

POLITICAL SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

Australia is deeply concerned by the dissolution of Cambodia's main opposition party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), and the banning of CNRP parliamentarians and officials from engaging in politics for five years.

This development has serious implications for democracy in Cambodia. It is the culmination of a series of troubling actions, including reduced access to free media, restrictions on civil society and intimidation of the opposition, specifically the detention of CNRP Leader Kem Sokha.

The Cambodian people are committed to democracy, demonstrated by the high turnout at the most recent commune election. With the dissolution of the CNRP, a significant number of votes cast in that election are no longer recognised.

As a friend of Cambodia, Australia urges the Cambodian Government to allow all its citizens to exercise their democratic rights, particularly ahead of the 2018 national election.